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CONFIDENTIAL 28 April 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Intelligence

SUBJECT: Transmittal of "The Autobiography of SRS -  
The First Platiletka (Five-Year Plan)"

The Senior Research Staff on International Communism began its official life on 20 January 1956. Its fifth anniversary, therefore, coincided with the inauguration of President Kennedy. We had hoped to express our sense of auspicious coincidence by submitting on that date a report of our first five years of activity. But International Communism, like Time, "waits for no man"; the events of November and December 1960, and important sequels in early 1961, have made it impossible to concentrate our full attention on preparing our story. Even submitting it late, however, we feel that we now see the panorama of our activity in a fuller and clearer perspective than would have been possible at an earlier date.

For a number of reasons we have chosen to treat our career in an informal autobiography, rather than in a formal report. This approach underlines the organic growth of an intellectual effort, the work of six or eight mature men and their assistants, attempting to create a new outlook, indeed something of a new discipline: the speculative study of communism, projected as far as possible, through the thought processes of the Communists themselves. This effort in five short - or long - years has gone through a sort of infancy, adolescence, and Sturm und Drang. We hope that, as Confucius said of his thirties, it is now li - established. The period, corresponding to his forties, in which the Master had "no perplexities," may lie before us. We do not claim to have reached it yet.

One of the advantages of confining ourselves to autobiography is that we can conveniently overlook certain less pleasant features of our environment, especially some of the areas of conflict or mistrust through which we have had to pass. We have not tried to present a picture of unrelieved "sweetness and light." But we have deliberately omitted those aspects of our relations with our colleagues which, if candidly treated in a report for general circulation within the Agency, might rekindle dying ashes.

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You of course are aware of some of these conflicts, and have, perhaps, watched them with concern. We trust you share our judgment that we have had some success in quieting them. As of now, we would speak of our general state of relations with others as "peaceful coexistence." We hope the next five years will move them into the more creative ambiance of "fraternal cooperation" and "construction."

We hope that you will share our conclusion that our five years have been generally successful and worthwhile, and that the Agency, the Intelligence Community, the Government, and the academic world are richer for our contribution. At the same time, candidly facing our own shortcomings as well as certain inadequacies in the circumstances under which we have had to work, we would like to submit to you a number of recommendations which could lead to an improvement in our second Piatiletka.

1. Closer relations with the higher echelons of the Agency. This is not an appeal for any formal acknowledgment of the value of our work to the directing elements of CIA, nor for any radical change in our position in the hierarchy. Rather it is a suggestion that our "input" be matched by a corresponding "feedback." We have raised the problem of impact before, but we still feel that it has not been solved. Quite frankly, we feel the need of greater give-and-take, of guidance, appreciation, criticism, and support. This need not involve close contact; we do not ask to be on the "squawk-box circuit." One simple practical innovation might solve the entire problem: a half hour appearance, say once a month, at the Deputies' meeting in the Director's office, in order to present our salient thoughts on developments in International Communism, and to ascertain their relevance to the concerns of our superiors.

2. Closer relations with planning elements in the National Security Council and the State Department. In his original concept, Mr. Bissell envisaged the creation of a Senior Research and Planning Staff. Virtually at the outset, "planning" was dropped from both the title and the charter of the Staff. We do not propose that it be reinserted. Rather we recommend, as the Director himself suggested at our meeting with him in July 1958, that our superiors assist us in getting our views considered by officials of higher planning bodies. We have been able to do a good deal in this field through personal contact, but this is not enough.

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3. Changing and strengthening the Staff personnel.

With its remarkably low turnover and rotation, SRS inevitably stands in need of new opportunities for its present members and of an infusion of fresh blood. We suggest that the prospects of each present member be constructively reviewed, bearing in mind that all are at a relatively advanced career stage, in which opportunities for change may be limited but are still worth careful exploration. At the same time, the Staff would greatly profit by assignment for periods of one or two years of younger persons, analysts from other parts of DDI, desk or field officers of DDP, JOTs, etc. We have ourselves on at least one occasion (Task Force 25X1A2g [REDACTED]) assigned one of our little handful to another element, and we are convinced that such exchanges are beneficial. Possibly two or three rotation slots (GS-11-13) could be made available for this purpose by DDI and DDP offices. Within limits we could meet these assignments on a reciprocal basis.

4. Additional support of SRS external research. During the past two years, DDI has approved employment of two contract consultants, plus research assistance (present annual level of authorization \$30,000). Despite certain "growing pains" in this modest program, we feel that it can be extended profitably. We recommend, therefore, a substantial increase in our budget allotment for this purpose, subject, of course, to specific justification.

5. Extension of SRS academic contract work. We believe that our development of university, institute and foundation contacts, here and abroad, has been one of our major contributions. We would like to continue and expand this. For the most part, this would involve no new provisions or funds. In two fields, however, we feel that more active support would be required.

a. We would like to develop a mechanism for bringing a number of qualified and cleared scholars to Washington for research work on fields of International Communism. A step is being taken in this direction in the case of [REDACTED] 25X1A5a1

25X1A5a [REDACTED]. We believe that this experiment should be followed up with scholars from the principal Soviet

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and Chinese research centers, [REDACTED] and other institutions; with appropriate security measures, invitations might be extended to an occasional foreign scholar, [REDACTED] This in turn could be reciprocated by assignment of SRS officers to academic centers (the practice already exists in DDI, but should be expanded).

b. The establishment of the post of Academic Contact Officer for Western Europe and of an organization fostering personal contacts of American intellectuals with members of the Asian and Middle Eastern intelligentsia (as recommended by [REDACTED] January 1959 and February 1961 respectively). 25X1A9a

25X1X4

We believe that these recommendations could be implemented with little additional budget outlay, and with benefit not only to SRS but to the whole of DDI, and the rest of the Intelligence Community.

6. Promotions for SRS personnel. During these five years there have been no promotions of senior SRS personnel resulting from their activity with the Staff. We believe that our achievements warrant consideration of each member's eligibility for promotion. This should be done in connection with the career planning review recommended above (3).

7. General review of all external research sponsored by the Agency in the field of International Communism. We believe that much of the external research outlay of the Agency bearing on International Communism is in need of review and coordination. (An example of such an undertaking was the recent cooperation of SRS and [REDACTED])

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[REDACTED] This of course is a matter which goes beyond the scope of SRS, but in which it could make an important contribution. It is suggested that a high level, joint DDI/DDP committee be organized, possibly under the Sino-Soviet Task Force, to make recommendations on this subject.

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